

declared the latter in a famous phrase, must learn to talk European. The thorny problem of reparations, hitherto treated as a political issue, had been handed over to a committee of financial experts under the chairmanship of General Dawes, an American business man, and the elaborate Dawes Report was accepted by the German Government. The Treaty of Versailles merely defined the basis of the victors' claims, for in 1919 it was impossible to forecast Germany's ability to pay. The amount per year was now fixed, a new German currency was created, an Allied loan of 40 millions was raised to start the machinery, and an American Agent-General was installed at Berlin to keep an eye on German finances. The weak point of the scheme was that no time limit was set, so that there was no inducement for the German people to exert themselves. When Marx, Stresemann and Luther met Herriot and MacDonald in London in August, 1924, the bitterness of past years had largely disappeared. For the first time German statesmen were treated as honoured guests, and the agreements of August 16 were described by the Prime Minister as the first Peace Treaty since the war.

#### VII. THE PROTOCOL

England believed in the League, but many Englishmen felt that it was only a beginning. In particular the reduction of armaments, prescribed by Article VII of the Covenant and urgently desired for financial reasons, was clearly impracticable without guaranteed security, and various projects combining the two purposes were hammered out by ingenious brains. The first, entitled the Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance, prepared by Lord Cecil with French help, was presented to the Assembly in 1923 by the Temporary Mixed Commission which had been appointed to explore

disarmament, and there-  
after, forwarded to members of the League. It  
laid down the  
duty of the signatories to reduce their  
armaments and to  
support each other against aggression in ways  
to be decided  
by the Council. The general obligation might  
be supplemented by regional agreements to supply  
military aid. France,  
the leading champion of the *status quo*, was its  
chief patron.  
Belgium and Czechoslovakia gave it their  
blessing. The other  
states were critical or definitely hostile. The  
Labour Government,  
which took office shortly after the  
presentation of the  
scheme, rejected it on the ground that it was  
likely to revive  
the old system of alliances, and was therefore  
contrary to the